

V.—THE TRIBUTES PAID IN FORMER DAYS TO THE SULTAN
OF BRUNEI BY THE THEN DEPENDENT PROVINCES OF
SARAWAK.—BY E. PARNELL, OF THE
SARAWAK GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

In former days when the Sultans of Brunei ruled the greater part of Borneo a special department of the state was organised to control the collecting of tributes due from the subjects of the Sultanate.

Feudal chiefs, who were given titles by the Sultan, were directly responsible to him for the payment of tribute due from the people of their respective provinces.

Under these chiefs, tax-collectors of various degrees were responsible for the collections of tributes due.

The appointment of chief collector carried with it the style *Juatan*, under whom came his assistants, the *Jejenang*¹. This last was not used as a title denoting any rank or status but was merely the name by which the assistants were known.

These men were empowered to collect taxes without any great amount of supervision, and consequently extortion became rife throughout the country.

The system was probably something of this nature:—a feudatory chief was ordered to pay yearly, 600 *pasau*² of padi to the Sultan; the *Juatan* would demand 700 *pasau* to be collected by his assistants, who in their turn would force the people to provide 800 *pasau*. By means of these extortions, while the collectors grew fat on their commissions, the unfortunate natives were ground down to a pitiable state of poverty; resulting eventually in discontent and in some cases armed refusal.³

It was in this state that Sir James Brooke found Sarawak on his arrival here in 1839.

An interesting old document recently came to my hands giving an account of the various tributes received by the Sultan of Brunei from his feudatory chiefs in charge of the provinces, now known as Sarawak.

1.—*Jejenang* or *Jenang*, an assistant in an office.

2.—*Pasau*. 1 *pasau* = 8 *gantang*. 1 *gantang* = 1 gallon.

3.—For an interesting account of the oppression of the natives by their Brunei rulers see "A History of Sarawak under its two white Rajahs" Chapter XIII. p. 326—372, 1309, by S. Baring-Gould and C. A. Bampfyld.

The author of this manuscript is one Yakob, who was Datu Emaum during the reigns of Sultan Muaddin (who was after his death known as Merhoum Bongsu) and Paduka Mulana Sultan Kemal-addin, by which Sultans the facts set forth were dictated; the object⁴ being that their descendants should have knowledge of the affairs of their ancestors.

The manuscript is dated Sunday, 6th day of Jema'ad Alachir, 1148 (Mohamedan style),⁵ so it is now some 180 years old. Some of the words used are not known to the present generation and in true oriental style the writer has successfully buried the real gist of his subject amid endless ramifications and, at times, bewildering repetitions.

I am indebted to Inchi Mahomed Zin for the loan of the document for many months and also for his kind assistance in the translation.

At the commencement of the manuscript I found an entry of more recent date stating that the then owner was Juatan Ali Akbar bin Orang Kaya di Gedong Amin Udin of Sungei Kadayan.

As a literal translation would have been practically unintelligible I have thought it more advisable to extract the actual information contained in the manu-

4.—The following is the extract from the manuscript referring to the object with which it was written:—

بهواينده مسلسله راج ۲ يغب اصل كرجان دنكري بروني
 ديتاكن اوليه دانو امام يعقوب اي مندخر درفد مرحوم
 بشمسو ويشبرنام سلطان محي الدين دان فدوك مولانا
 سلطان كمال الدين كدوا راج ايت مهورتنن دانو نينق
 مويغن مسفاي دكتهوي اوله مگل انق دچون
 مسفاي سكارغ اين

5.—The date is given in the manuscript as follows:—

كشد هجرة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مسويو
 مسراتس امفت فوله دلافن تاهن فد انم هاري
 بولن جمادالاحر فد هاري احد فد تيگ بلس هاري بوان
 فد وتتو ظهر ايت مسلي دانو يعقوب مهورت اين
 والله اعلم

6.—The following passage refers to the owner of the manuscript:—

علامت مسورت فيهين جران علي اكبر بن كشد راحيم
 الله فيهين اورغ كاي دغدوغ امين الدين مسوي
 كسدان اداب

script and present it in some sort of tabular form. For this purpose the various tributes have been divided into the following sections:—

A. ANNUAL TRIBUTES.

B. SPECIAL TRIBUTES.

This latter section has again been sub-divided into four headings thus:—

- (i) *Personal Tributes.*
- (ii) *Tributes due on the death of a Sultan.*
- (iii) *Tributes paid on appointments of Datu etc., etc.*
- (iv) *Presents given to the Sultan on visiting Brunei.*

In addition to these headings a few notes of interest have been added, *viz.*

- (a.) *The Rewards paid for the return of escaped slaves.*
- (b.) *The division of the Districts under their feudal chiefs.*

The description of this last item is by no means clear, and I can only hope that the solution here given is that intended by the original author.

Section A.

ANNUAL TRIBUTES⁷

*War-boats.*⁸

2	boats	from	Kalaka
1	boat	„	Saribas
1	„	„	Sebangan
1	„	„	Sadong
1	„	„	Sarawak

Padi.

800	pasau	from	Kalaka
300	„	„	Sadong
800	„	„	Sarawak
600	„	„	Sebuyow
150	„	„	Sebangan

Sago.

2000 lajang 6 jengkal long⁹ from Muka

7.—The word used in the text is *upeti* meaning tribute due from a subject to his ruler.

8.—*Prahu bangunan.* Apparently an obsolete expression for *war boat*; *bangun-bangunan* means *a tower of a fort*, and possibly this is the derivation of the word used here.

9.—*Lajang 6 jengkal panjang.* *Lajang* is an obsolete word which is replaced now by the word *tampin* meaning a leaf packet made of *daun apung* or leaves of the nipa palm (*Nipa fruticans*); its size varies, but its length is usually 2½ feet.

Formerly a *tampin* was supposed to contain 40 *catties*—(about 53½ lb. avoirdupois).

1 *jengkal* = 1 *kilan* = 1 *span* = about 8 inches; so a *lajang* of this size was larger than a *tampin* and would contain probably 65 *catties* (about 87 lb.)

2000 lajang 6 jengkal long from Patanak

Cotton.

3 bohara¹⁰ from Batang Lupar

1 „ „ „ Skrang

12 yuta¹¹ „ „ other dependencies

*Gold.*¹²

This was paid by people of Oya and Rejang; the amount however is not stated.

Section B.

SPECIAL TRIBUTES.¹³

(i)

Bees-wax (refined.)

1 picul ¹⁴	from	Datu Patinggi of Kalaka
1 „	„	O. K. Bandar „ „
1 „	„	Datu Patinggi of Saribas
1 „	„	Datu Bandar „ „
$\frac{1}{2}$ „	„	(each) Mentri of Kalaka & Saribas
1 senantan ¹⁵	from	„ „ Sebangan
1 „	„	„ „ Sadong
2 „	„	anak mentri ¹⁶ of the above.

The *Dayang Dayang*¹⁷ provided *Tudong dulang*¹⁸ and cotton for making lamp wicks.

(ii) In the case of the death of a Sultan a special call was made on the people, the extent of which is not stated.

10.—1 bohara = 3 picul = 400 lb.

11.—1 yuta or juta = 1 million, sometimes used to express 10 catties; from the context it is used here in the latter sense.

12.—Presumably the gold used for taxes was native gold from those two districts. This is of interest because only bare traces can be found up the Rejang River now, though a place called *Makam* up that river is still well-known for its former gold, which is said to have been of very fine quality.

13.—The word here used in the manuscript is *bangkis* instead of *upeti*.

bangkis means a present of a complimentary nature in contra-distinction to *upeti*, a tax, which is demanded by a ruler.

14.—1 picul = 133 $\frac{1}{3}$ lb.

15.—1 senantan = 10 catties = 13 $\frac{1}{3}$ lbs. 1 catty = 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ lb.

16.—This apparently is an error—it seems unlikely that an *anak mentri* should have to pay more than a *mentri*. Perhaps the number of *senantan* due from a *mentri* has been omitted.

17.—*Dayang Dayang* = the wife or female children of the Datu, Mentri, etc., etc.

18.—*Tudong dulang* is probably what is now known as *tudong sarang* or perhaps *delamak*.

Tudong sarang is a cover for dishes, generally made of the leaves of the nipa palm which are coloured and interwoven into patterns.

Delamak is a silk cloth with gold thread interwoven, which is also used for covering dishes.

(iii) On obtaining the appointment of Datu Patinggi, 7 slaves were sent to the Sultan.

On obtaining the appointment of Shahbandar, 6 slaves were sent to the Sultan.

On obtaining the appointment of Mentri¹⁹ of Kalaka, Sebang, Sadong, Saribas, or Sarawak, 3 slaves were sent to the Sultan.

The appointment of Mentri among the Milanau²⁰ carried with it the payment of 10 slaves and 20 or 30 tahl²¹ of gold, according to the means, together with 2 or 3 palkang²², chanang²³ and gong siku²⁴.

(iv) On visiting the Sultan at Brunei the Datu Patinggi and Shahbandar, also the mentri and awang awang²⁵, presented cloths of varying quality according to rank.

The two Datu presenting 1 chelari²⁶ each, as befitted their station, while others of rank presented silks and tributes of a more modest nature.

If the Sultan, or a representative of his, went from Brunei on a special tour of inspection the whole of the population of the district visited was put at his personal disposal.

A.—The following was the scale of rewards paid for the return of an escaped slave :—

If escaped from Muka and taken at Kalaka refund food.

„	„	Kalaka ²⁷	„	Saribas	4 amas ²⁸
„	„	„	„	Sebang	5 „
„	„	„	„	Sadong	6 „
„	„	„	„	Samarahan	7 „
„	„	„	„	Sarawak	8 „
„	„	„	„	Simatan	10 „
„	„	„	„	Sambas	16 „

19.—*Mentri*, a civil officer of a government as opposed to *Hulubalang* = Commander of the forces, *Laksamana* = Admiral of the fleet.

20.—The payment to the Sultan on appointment of the Milanau seems to be on a much larger scale than the Malays, probably because the Milanau were wealthier people.

21.—*Tahl* = $\frac{1}{16}$ catty. 12 tahils = 1 lb. (avoirdupois).

22.—*Palkang*. I am unable to find the meaning of this word.

23.—*Chanang*, "medium sized gong with hemispherical boss, sometimes elaborately ornamented." (*Shelford*, Str. Br., Roy. Asiat. Soc. Journ. XL. p. 47 (1904).

24.—*Gong siku*. I am unable to discover anything about this kind of gong.

25.—*Awang awang*. Sons of the Mentri and others of high birth (*Wilkinson's Dictionary* gives *Awang* = youth).

26.—*Chelari* is a shining silk cloth with gold embroidery.

27.—From this account it would appear that at that time Kalaka was the chief district outside Brunei.

28.—*Amas*. 1 amas = 64 grains (Troy).

This probably refers to a weight of gold but it may possibly be a term describing a certain fine, as *rael* is now commonly used.

B.—The country was divided into 3 districts for purposes of receipt of Revenue for the collection of which the following were responsible in Brunei.

- 1.—Brunei to Blahit under Pangeran di Gedong and
Orang Kaya di Gedong.
 - 2.—Miri to Baraya „ Pangeran Bandahara.
 - 3.—Muka to Sarawak „ O. K. di Gedong Tengah.
-